

# 2020-2021 FLEX Executive Summary

*Dr. Lezley C. Lewis, Executive Director Professional Learning & Innovation*

The FLEX Initiative was designed to promote a comprehensive approach to teacher engagement in professional learning activities. Teachers who held a 187-day contract and provided direct instruction to students were given the opportunity to participate and complete the required thirty hours. The thirty hours were designated as 18 CONTENT and 12 ELECTIVE and earned outside of contract time. Teachers who were hired after August 24 were provided the opportunity to earn up to an additional thirty hours of compensation at their daily rate. The 2020-2021 FLEX Professional Learning Initiative began June 8, 2020, and concluded April 15, 2021.

## *Teacher Professional Development Plan*

Teachers, in conjunction with their T-TESS appraiser, created a Professional Development Plan (PDP) aligned to their T-TESS professional learning goals. The PDP was housed in *Eduphoria! Strive*, and focused on continuous improvement and growth. The PDP was viewable by the teacher and appraiser. The FLEX Day Initiative provided for teacher ownership in professional activities through mutually agreed upon selection, personalization, and engagement.

## *Teacher Voice*

To incorporate stakeholder voice in the professional learning activities, the Academic Convening was created. Teacher voice was a vital part of the development of **connectED**. Academic Convenings were held to gather representation of teacher voice to provide input via surveys, in-person meetings, and committee and/or team membership. A Host Handbook was created to serve as a guide/timeline in planning a successful in-person conference (see Appendix). The Host Committee participated in conference themed discussions, review of concurrent session proposals, and curation of proposals to align with district academic goals. The Committee recommended exhibitors and sponsors, assisted with marketing and publicity, and used local knowledge to identify appealing program content. Through the solicited feedback from teachers, Professional Learning and Innovation (PLI) was able to organize sessions into the various strands offered during **connectED**.

## *Communication*

Throughout 2020-2021, the PLI website was the most up-to-date source for information regarding FLEX, including FLEX guidance documents, FAQs, on-campus professional learning forms, outside-the-district professional learning forms, how to check FLEX credits in *Eduphoria! Strive*, etc. PLI utilized social media, Facebook and Twitter, to communicate with stakeholders the updates and progression of FLEX as well as upon conclusion of the 2020-2021 FLEX Initiative.

During summer 2020, the **connectED** Google site ([www.fwisd.org/connected](http://www.fwisd.org/connected)) was also a critical resource for information regarding professional learning courses, which included all pertinent details related to the sessions. FLEX guidance documents, FAQs, informational and how-to videos, featured speakers, social media contests with details, and a 24/7 help desk managed by PLI, were also essential components of the site and allowed for effective communication with teachers and other stakeholders. PLI utilized social media, Facebook and Twitter, Microsoft Teams, and email to communicate with district colleagues and

teachers to provide updates regarding the progression of **connectED**. A weekly, informative “Wake up with Wendy” segment was an essential part of disseminating the details of **connectED**. The utilization of PLI integration points (department-designated contacts) also kept an open line of communication with all stakeholders. During the initial months of planning, PLI created, displayed, and disseminated posters, save-the-date announcements, and postcards throughout the district and city of Fort Worth.

Additionally, teachers who engaged above and beyond the requirements of FLEX were recognized (with their permission) via a social media showcase on both Facebook and Twitter. The teachers were showcased in increments of completed hours (see chart below). Teachers who elected to participate were encouraged to provide a quote regarding their FLEX professional learning experience as well as a picture of their choice if they chose to participate. The showcase consisted of a graphic with the teacher’s quote, number of completed hours, picture and campus. The showcasing occurred on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays on the PLI social media pages. Thirty hour completions were grouped by campus. Showcasing began in May and continued through August 2021 in an effort to continue positivity, early completion, and momentum for FLEX in summer 2021.

Below is the breakdown of the participants and the order of their showcasing:

Hour Range	Number of Participants
100+	8
80-100	25
70-80	34
60-70	125
50-60	218
51	279
54	229
57-59	144
48	429
45	450
42	777
39	1005
34-36	1986
30.5-33	2337
30	2357

In March, teachers who had not completed their thirty hours were intentionally targeted in order to ensure access to FLEX professional learning. PLI Specialists served as professional learning advocates for 1,586 teachers who had not completed the 30 FLEX hours as well as shepherding additional, online content neutral offerings to ensure all teachers had the opportunity to complete. Written notices (see Language of Notice below) were provided, coupled with extensions of the FLEX deadline to April 29, 2020, resulted in a 96% completion rate.

**LANGUAGE OF NOTICE:**

*The FLEX 2020-2021 Initiative has engaged a majority of the FWISD teachers in deep content and elective professional learning. There is a requirement to complete thirty hours (30) for 187 contract day teachers hired on or before August 24, 2020, for the 2020-2021 school year. The deadline to complete the hours is **April 15, 2021**. Eduphoria! records indicate that **you have NOT completed the required 30 hours**. The Professional Learning and Innovation Department*

will provide the necessary support and facilitation to assist you in completing the 30-hour requirement. There are many great opportunities for FLEX credit on Eduphoria! If you have any questions, please feel free to email Dr. Lezley Lewis at [lezley.lewis@fwisd.org](mailto:lezley.lewis@fwisd.org).

### ***FLEX Professional Learning***

#### *Summer Professional Learning: connectED*

In June 2020, the 2020-2021 FLEX Initiative moved fully online. **connectED** was FWISD’s first virtual conference designed to provide teachers with relevant, high quality and engaging professional learning experiences. Planning for **connectED 2020** began June 2019. The professional learning event was scheduled to be held at three different venues: Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, South Hills High School, and the Professional Development Center as a face-to-face conference.

#### *COVID-19 Response*

COVID-19 impacted the decision to change the format to virtual as we progressed in the planning process throughout the spring. Choice in course selection, flexibility of completion dates and times, and personalization of learning were a few of the top considerations while plans were being created. **connectED** utilized various online platforms for cross-curricular professional learning experiences resulting in a variety of professional learning sessions. Sessions were viewable on May 25, launched on June 8, and remained open until August 7. All **connectED** sessions were FLEX eligible and varied in lengths of time starting at 0.5-hour increments. Teachers were afforded the opportunity to not only learn but earn the minimum requirement of 30 FLEX professional learning hours through **connectED**. Sessions were added weekly to the **connectED** site, where the menu of offerings was available and accessible to teachers upon demand. The site was hosted on the PLI website ([www.fwisd.org/pli](http://www.fwisd.org/pli)).

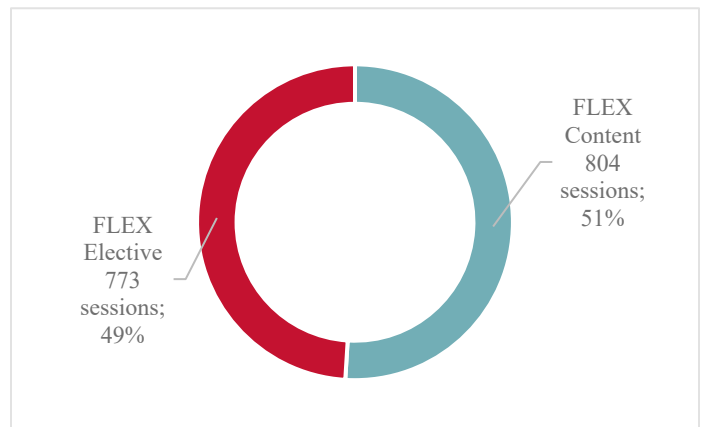
#### *Fall and Spring Professional Learning*

Providers continued to offer sessions throughout the school year to build teacher capacity. The content-neutral sessions provided by Educational Technology, Racial Equity, and Trauma Informed Services were among the top offered and attended sessions.

### ***FLEX Sessions and Enrollment***

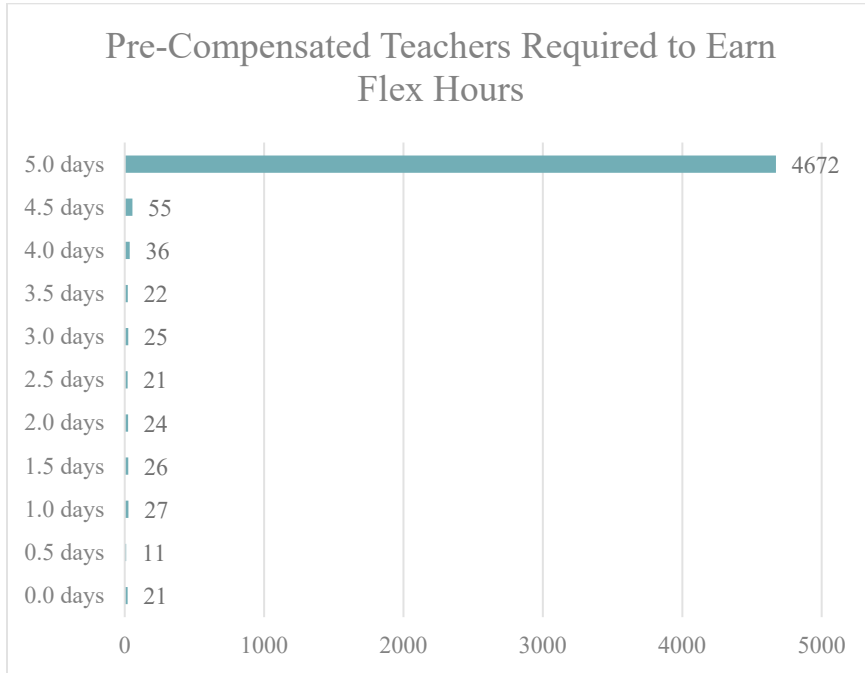
#### *Enrollment Statistics*

There were 4,802 teachers who participated in connectED. Teachers were able to choose the sessions to meet their needs in content areas and in other areas such as social emotional learning. There were 1337 sessions offered during **connectED**. Many of these sessions were repeated to offer teachers multiple opportunities to participate, and there were both synchronous and asynchronous offerings. Of these sessions offered, there were 804 FLEX Content hours available and 773 FLEX Elective hours (for a grand total of 1577 credit hours) available to participants



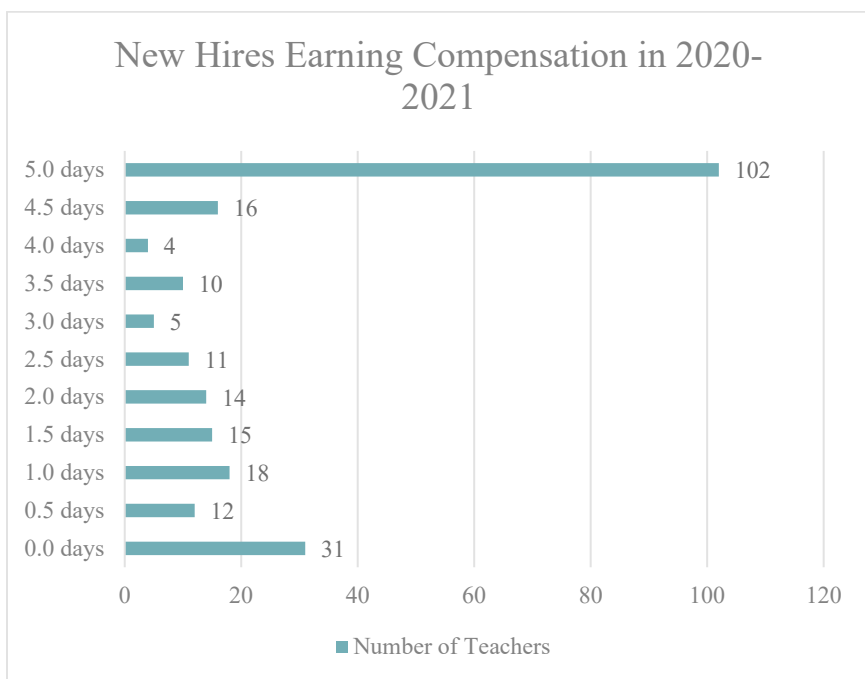
After connectED, there were additional sessions offered in-district throughout the fall and spring semesters. There were 2,014 sessions, including out-of-district offerings, available to teachers for Flex in the fall and spring semesters.

*Teachers Hired on or Before August 24, 2020*



Days Completed	No. Teachers	%
5	4672	95%
4.5	55	1%
4	36	1%
3.5	22	0%
3	25	1%
2.5	21	0%
2	24	0%
1.5	26	1%
1	27	1%
0.5	11	0%
0	21	0%
	4940	

*Teachers Hired after August 24, 2020*



Days Earned	No. Teachers	%
5	102	43%
4.5	16	7%
4	4	2%
3.5	10	4%
3	5	2%
2.5	11	5%
2	14	6%
1.5	15	6%
1	18	8%
0.5	12	5%
0	31	13%
	238	

## Teacher Feedback and Survey Results

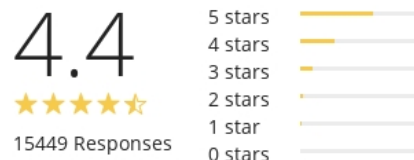
Teacher voice was collected through a district Qualtrics survey administered from the commencement to the culmination of **connectED** to solicit feedback. The survey took approximately 3-5 minutes to complete. The survey consisted of quantitative and qualitative data and yielded 15,449 responses. The survey prompts were:

- How well did the facilitator embrace the online learning?
- How would you rate the opportunities for engagement throughout the course?
- How would you rate the quality of support you received during your professional learning experience?
- How well did the facilitator demonstrate mastery of the intended outcomes?
- How well was the session differentiated based on the needs of the learner?
- How well did your professional learning experience align with your professional learning plan?
- What was your greatest challenge and/or success during your professional learning experience?
- Please provide any additional feedback that would be helpful.

Quality of Professional Learning Experience ⓘ 15,449 Responses



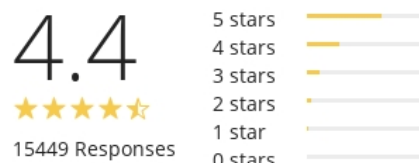
PLI Experience Align with Your Plan ⓘ 15,449 Responses



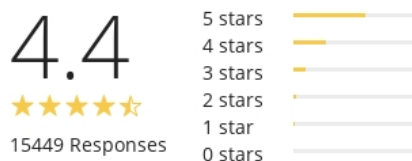
Facilitator Embrace Online Learning ⓘ 15,449 Responses



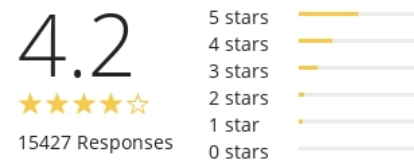
Opportunities for Engagement ⓘ 15,427 Responses



Facilitator Demonstrate Mastery of Content ⓘ 15,427 Responses



Differentiated Session Based on Needs of Learner ⓘ 15,427 Responses





### ***Compensation Disputes***

Teachers who felt that the application of FLEX to their compensation, whether it was to reduce or to add, were provide an online mechanism through PLI to dispute the reduction or addition of compensation. There was one total dispute with no changes made to the employee's compensation.